

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Paragraph beginning at line 3 of page 57 has been amended as follows:

Another feature of the barrel 16 of the semiautomatic handgun 200 is the provision of a truncated conical mouth or portion 16f at the front end portion of the barrel 16. More specifically, the barrel 16 has the peripheral wall portion 16c and a cylindrical portion 16e forming a front terminal end of the barrel 16. The truncated conical portion 16f is disposed between and is contiguous with each of the peripheral wall portion 16c and the cylindrical portion 16e and has a tapered surface which decreases from the front end to the rear end of the barrel 16. The truncated conical portion ~~13f~~ 16f provides a means for facilitating the front end portion of the barrel to pass through the front open end 14h of the barrel hole 14g of the slide 14 during a firing sequence of the semiautomatic handgun 200. During a firing sequence, starting from a locked breech condition of the barrel 16, upon firing of a round the pressure of the gases generated upon ignition of the gunpowder in the round push the empty casing of the round against the breech face 50b of the slide 14, thereby starting the rearward movement of the slide 14. During rearward movement of the slide 14, the barrel 16 is pushed rearwardly and downwardly by means of the barrel cam

slot 44b as the front end portion of the barrel 16 passes through the open end 14h of the slide 14. The taper of the truncated conical portion ~~13f~~ 16f allows the front end portion of the barrel 16 to clear the inner surface portion of the barrel hole 14g at the open end 14h and pass therethrough, thereby preventing the barrel from locking-up (i.e., prevents the front end portion of the barrel from striking the inner surface of the barrel hole 14g which would in turn prevent the front end portion of the barrel from passing through the ~~open~~ open end 14h of the barrel hole) during a firing sequence. In order to achieve the advantage of the truncated conical portion ~~13f~~ 16f to prevent the front end portion of the barrel 16 from locking-up relative to the slide 14 during a firing sequence, the tapered surface of the truncated conical portion ~~13f~~ 16f is disposed at an angle α_8 relative to the peripheral wall portion 16c of the barrel 16. Preferably, the angle α_8 is in the range of about 9.5 to 10.5 degrees.